The Neceſſity of a right Underſtanding, in order to True WISDOM.

A

SERMON

PREACH'D at the

PARISH-CHURCH

OF

BISHOP-STORTFORD,

TUESDAY, *Aug.* 26, 1712.

AT THE

Annual Meeting of the Gentlemen Educated at that SCHOOL.

By *THO. COX*, Jun. *M. A.*
A late SCHOLAR there.

Publiſh'd at the Requeſt of the Stewards and Gentlemen.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. Leake*, for R. KNAPLOCK at the *Biſhop's-Head* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard.* 1712.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

Reverend THO. TOOK, D.D.

His Learned Maſter;

To *William Marſhall* Eſq;
To *George Monſon* Eſq; } STEWARDS;

To *Pulter Foreſter* Eſq;
Robert Elwes Eſq;
Mr. *Marmaduke Wright*,
Mr. *Everard Sayer*,
To *John Jocelyn* Eſq;
William Jolly Eſq;
Mr. *William Gardiner*,
Mr. *William Gill*,

And the reſt of his *School-fellows* then preſent:

The following DISCOURSE

Is with all due Reſpect

Submitted,

By T. C.

TO THE

Reverend Tho. Took, D.D.

His Learned Master;

To William Marshall Esq; } STEWARDS;
To George Monson Esq;

To Walter Forester Esq; } To John Jocelyn Esq;
Robert Ebres Esq; } William Jolly Esq;
Mr. Marmaduke Wright, } Mr. William Gardiner,
Mr. Eperard Sayer, } Mr. William Gill,

And the rest of his School-fellows then present:

The following DISCOURSE

Is with all due Respect

Submitted,

By T. C.

PROV. iv. 7.

Wiſdom is the principal thing, therefore get Wiſdom: and with all your gettings get Underſtanding.

WHOEVER will be at the Pains attentively to conſider the State of Human Nature, muſt allow, That our Wills and Affections are at preſent very much deprav'd; That our Reaſon itſelf is too far ſubjected to the Perjudices of Senſe and Paſſion; and, That our whole Nature is univerſally corrupted. Yet were we even now left to ourſelves, and without any Improvements of Mind and Underſtanding, every Age would be farther declining into Ignorance and Error, and the World at laſt degenerate into Fierceneſs and Barbarity. Were our ordinary Means of Information to be neglected, and our Intellectual Faculties lie incultivated, thoſe Seeds of Vertue and Goodneſs, which are latent in every one of us, would either die for want of Manuring, or, which is worſe, run out to pernicious Weeds. This is confirm'd by our

daily Obſervation; we find even among a Civiliz'd People, that the more Unpoliſh'd, Illiterate Sort are dull, indocible, and inſolent, aſſuming to themſelves a liberty of Speaking and Acting as they liſt; and whole Nations, if depriv'd of thoſe Advantages, if condemn'd to the ſame Ruſticity, would be prone to the ſame clowniſh Untractableneſs: For a Savage Ferity as naturally ſucceeds the want of Inſtruction, as Darkneſs the abſence of the Sun. Knowledge therefore, and Learning, not only give us the Preeminence over the whole Creation, but even diſtinguiſh one Man from another; are not only the Perfection of Human Nature, but of ſingular Uſe in the Conduct of Human Life.

Beſides, The very Happineſs of Man, who is a Rational Being, ſeems altogether to depend on the Exerciſe and Improvement of Reaſon: For as Intellectual Pleaſures far exceed thoſe of Senſe; ſo, to ſtudy the Gratification of our ignoble Part only, to ſpend our Time on Trifles, to the neglect of Things more Important, is fooliſh and impertinent. 'Tis true, ſome have ſat down contentedly in Ignorance, and have aſpired to no higher Degrees of Knowledge than they brought into the World with them: Others, who have made greater Pretenſions to it, have yet held the acquiſition of *Underſtanding*, but a ſecondary Employment; have apply'd themſelves chiefly to the Buſineſs of the World, and left the Study as well as the Practice of *Wiſdom* to their After-Age, and began to Live at their Lives end: Theſe indeed might have a good Affection to a Thing ſo valuable, yet have been unfortunately carry'd down the Stream, and have placed their *Summum Bonum* little higher than the Vulgar. But the Royal *Wiſe Man* is a celebrated Inſtance of a right Choice, who having

having a liberty of electing what he could wiſh moſt for his own Happineſs, by the Direction of the *Giver of every perfect gift*, determin'd, not for long Life, Riches, and Honour, but *a wiſe and underſtanding Heart*. And from him, who by Experience found he had no reaſon to repent, the ſame unerring Guide has taught us what is the true and proper Happineſs of Man, what his real and chief Good, and that is *Wiſdom*; *Wiſdom is the principal thing, therefore*, &c.

Before I come to treat of the Words, 'twill be neceſſary to diſtinguiſh between Underſtanding and Wiſdom. Now by Underſtanding, I conceive, is meant that Faculty of the Mind, by which we not only apprehend all ſimple Ideas and Natures of Things, but compare them together, and fix in our Minds their ſeveral Relations, Agreement or Diſagreement. Where Underſtanding ends, there Wiſdom begins; which is a practical Judgment of Mind, ſelecting out of theſe numberleſs Relations of Things, ſuch Rules of Action as are moſt for the Advantage of the Actor, and for the Good of Society. For as a wiſe and skillful Artificer, out of a large Collection of Materials, firſt ſelects thoſe that will be moſt proper for his Work, and then, by his Art and Wiſdom, poliſhes and joyns them in due Form: So the Underſtanding gathers together ſuch Rules of Action, as by the Guidance and Direction of Wiſdom will moſt promote our Happineſs. So that 'twill be neceſſary, by our Study and Care, to get a right Underſtanding, in order to act wiſely; we muſt learn, and by our Induſtry obtain, true Notions of Things, otherwiſe our Practice, which is directed by them, cannot be warrantable. As I hope to Evidence in the Sequel of this Diſcourſe, in which I will,

I. De-

I. Deſcribe the Excellency and Uſefulneſs of Wiſdom; by which it will appear, that it deſerves the Commendation given it, That 'tis *the principal Thing*.

II. Prove, That in order to attain this Wiſdom or true Judgment of Things, We muſt *get Underſtanding*. And,

Laſtly, I ſhall apply this to our preſent Meeting. And,

I. If we conſider *Wiſdom* abſtractedly in itſelf, it will appear to be moſt Excellent, and moſt Uſeful: For I take the true Happineſs of Man to conſiſt in that Satisfaction of Mind, which he takes in being perfect in himſelf, and anſwering all the Obligations he lies under to others. And if ſo, *Wiſdom* muſt be its principal Ingredient: For 'tis this Vertue that places us, as it were, in the Centre of the Univerſe, and teaches us to diſcharge all the Duties we owe to thoſe Above us, Equal, or Inferiour to us.

'Tis *Wiſdom* that raiſes our Thoughts to the Original of Things, and knowing there is a God, obliges us to Reverence and Serve him: That begets in us an awful Submiſſion to his Providence, Authority and Commands; That will never ſuffer us to call them Incredible Myſteries, which he is pleas'd to make the Object of our Faith, nor ſcruple Obedience to any Laws He has Enacted. And from Heavenly Beings,

Wiſdom deſcends to reſpect thoſe who bear the Divine Stamp, and are God's Vice-gerents on Earth; knowing, that when God withdrew himſelf from governing Mankind (as he did in the firſt Ages of

the World) he committed his Authority to Men like ourſelves, as a Teſtimony of his Care over them: That this High Station is too great to be conferr'd by Original Contracts and Covenants, no Man having ſuch a Power of his own or another's Life, as to give Liberty to any to take it away. To theſe *Wiſdom* always allows illimited Subordination to prevent the Confuſion that is conſequent on Anarchy and Reſiſtance; for tho' Tyranny may deſerve ſuch Oppoſition, yet, ſince even that will not produce Half the Miſchiefs of frequent Rebellions, *Wiſdom* obliges us to chuſe the leſſer Evils as well as greater Good; to be ſubmiſſive to Government as the Ordinance of God, and for Conſcience-ſake. And a-like, tho' in an inferiour Degree, does *Wiſdom* direct us to pay due Honour to all ſuch Perſons and Places, Times and Appointments, as have ſpecial Relation to God and his Service.

Further, *Wiſdom* inſtructs us in all the Relative Duties of Men to one another, teaches us a good Behaviour in our ſeveral Stations: It makes good Princes, and loyal People; tender Parents, and dutiful Children; mild Maſters, and diligent Servants: It makes us compaſſionate to the Afflicted; generous to the Indigent; and helpful to the Diſtreſſed. *Wiſdom* influences our whole Converſation, teaches us to be reſpectful to our Superiors, kind to Inferiors, courteous and affable to all. By *Wiſdom* Kingdoms are kept regular and peaceable, every one acting in his own Sphere with Steddineſs and Conſcience: It preſerves us from Publick Enmities Abroad, Private Jars, and Civil Tumults at Home: In a Word, *Wiſdom* obliges us in all the Paſſages and Occurences of Life, to act like Men of Reaſon and Underſtanding, to do our Duty to God, to be uſeful to our Neighbours, and

carefully provide for our own Welfare; ſo that *Wiſdom* is the principal Thing conſider'd abſtractedly in itſelf. But,

If we conſider it Relatively, and with reſpect to other Things that may ſeem to claim a Share in our Happineſs, it will appear ſtill more Excellent. Could we look into the Pedigree and Origin of *Wiſdom*, we ſhould find it of Divine Extraction; of which the Almighty himſelf is the Fountain, and the Eternal Λόγος, the Firſt Emanation. We ſhall find that all the Works of Creation and Providence, are but the Productions of it: From this flow all thoſe ſmall Streams diſcernable in human Actions; for 'tis by this *Kings Reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.* Man's *Wiſdom* then is a Ray of the Divine; And can any thing on Earth be compared to her that is of ſo noble an Original, even of the Nature and Image of God himſelf? But allowing *Wiſdom* no ſuch ſeparate Exiſtence, granting it only an Acquirement of the Soul, as Wealth is of the Body, the Poſſeſſion of it will be infinitely more valuable; for as the Soul is of a much more ſublime Nature than the Body, ſo are its Operations and Improvements alſo. The outward ſenſible Bleſſings Men have, are common to the Beaſts as well as themſelves; nay, I may add, the Beaſts have a greater and more exquiſite Enjoyment of Senſe than Man can have, becauſe their Satisfaction is pure, without thoſe Miſgivings and Uneaſineſſes which make the fulleſt Fruition diſſatisfactory: Whereas a Mind, enrich'd with Knowledge, ſoars above all ſublunary Things, and may be number'd among the Angels.

Prov. viii. 22.

Ver. 15.

What are Riches, conſider'd in themſelves, but an imaginary Poſſeſſion of much; which pleaſes the Fancy, but cannot ſatisfy the Judgment? What is Honour,

nour, but the Noiſe of the Mercenary and Injudicious? What is Strength, but decaying Force; and Pleaſure, but empty Satisfaction? Yet were theſe in the Power of a Wiſe Man, how excellent and uſeful would be their Application? What Advantage would redound to both Publick and Private, by Wealth judiciouſly expended? What Encouragement would the Example of Wiſe Men in Honour and Power give to Vertue? Whereas, leave theſe Gifts of Providence in the Hands of Men more Proſperous than Wiſe, and how lamentable would be the Effect? Riches would only give an Opportunity for Injury and Oppreſſion, or elſe Ruin their Owners by exceſſive Indulgences. The Honour and Strength of the Imprudent, would only exalt them with Pride, or put them upon ſuch aſpiring Attempts, as would prove their Deſtruction. 'Tis by *Wiſdom* that theſe are rightly apply'd, by That they are made beneficial to ourſelves and others; and conſequently, *Wiſdom* muſt be more uſeful, more excellent than they. Which I think ſufficiently proves the Wiſe Man's Aſſertion, That *Wiſdom* (whether taken abſtractly or relatively) *is the principal thing*. In order to obtain which, I'm

II. To prove, That 'tis neceſſary, in the firſt place, to get *Underſtanding*. If I have rightly defin'd *Wiſdom* to be a practical Judgment of Mind, ſelecting out of the multitude of Things known, ſuch Rules of Action as are moſt for the Advantage of the Actor, and of Society; it is a neceſſary Conſequence, that *Wiſdom* is the higheſt Degree of Knowledge, the Perfection of Thought and Reaſoning, the Reſult of much Inquiſitiveneſs, Search, Obſervation and Ex-

perience; which is only obtain'd by much Diligence and Study, as the Text ſeems to imply, by adviſing to acquire or *get* it. Now *Underſtanding*, which is a clear, diſtinct, and perfect Knowledge of Things, a true Apprehenſion of both ſimple and complex Idea's, muſt be the Way to *Wiſdom*; becauſe no Man, among ſuch variety of Affairs and Circumſtances of Life as daily occur, can act wiſely, unleſs he is furniſh'd with ſuch right Notions as his Judgment may proceed upon: For as it is unjuſt in a Prince to require Obedience to a Law, before its Promulgation: ſo is it weak in ourſelves to pretend to Wiſdom, before we have attain'd the neceſſary Knowledge of Good and Evil; without which, we can neither judge nor determine what is to be done, or what to be avoided. *Wiſdom* has an inſeparable Dependance on the *Underſtanding*; the one is greater or leſs, according to the Degrees of the other; and we can never make a true Judgment of Things, unleſs we rightly Underſtand them.

1. In order to attain a full and compleat Knowledge of Things, 'twill be neceſſary to have true Notions and right Apprehenſions of Individuals, which are call'd *ſimple Idea's*. For tho' we are endued with a boundleſs Capacity of receiving whatever Knowledge is preſented to us; yet our Underſtandings being Finite, cannot ſo well attend to Things in groſs; nor can they know every thing at once, and at firſt view, which makes the particular Conſideration of Bodies and Spirits, Subſtance and Accident, Quantities and Qualities, Acts and Habits, Independencies and Relations, and many other ſubordinate Diſtinctions, neceſſary to a right Perception

of

of Things. Words convey to our Underſtandings this Knowledge; they not only teach us the Names, but give us great Inſight into the Natures of Things, and by diligent Enquiry we may find out their diſtinct Properties and Qualities, whence we are to raiſe ſuch Definitions and Deſcriptions, as will give us an Adequate Idea, and perfect Knowledge of them: For every Man to do this would be tedious, our whole Age would be ſpent before we can arrive at it; while diligent Attendance to the Inſtruction of skillful Maſters, communicating their Notions to us, would render the Attainment of this Part of Knowledge eaſie: For want of which Mankind have, in all Ages, fallen into very dangerous Errors, and few have ever come to be truly wiſe, becauſe of theſe Fundamental Miſtakes *in limine*. Thus, in Religion, we muſt impute all the Idolatry and falſe Worſhip, all the Tritheiſm, Polytheiſm, and black Catalogue of Hereſies abroad in the World, to the falſe Apprehenſions and wrong Notions Men have of a God. Thus, alſo in Politicks, we can attribute the Riſe and Growth of thoſe Seditious, Factious, Republican Principles among us, only to the falſe Idea Men have of a King; for whether we allow him a particular Inſtitution from God or no, he is one that has the Supreme Juriſdiction over us next under God: And if ſo, thoſe have certainly baſe Conceptions of him, that make him the Creature of the State, the Tool of the People; it being contray to the very Idea of a Commander over others, to be ſubject to, to be diſobey'd or depos'd, by them. This is confounding the very Eſſences of Things, making the Firſt laſt, and the Laſt firſt. Theſe falſe Notions then are carefully to be avoided,

as

as being the Foundation of ſo much Diſorder, and ſuch deſtructive Errors.

2. In order to attain a full and compleat Knowledge of Things, that we may act wiſely; 'Tis not only neceſſary that we have true Notions of Individuals, but that we further conſider their Relations and Dependencies one on another, and carefully connect and joyn them together by way of Predication one of another, and ſo make up Propoſitions and Maxims of Truth, which are called Complex Ideas. Even while we are meditating upon, and obſerving the Exiſtence of Things individually, we cannot but take notice of their Dependencies; which naturally leads us to reaſon about their Agreement or Diſagreement. Thus, when we conſider Matter and Subſtance, we naturally obſerve that Accidents have a Dependance on, and Inherence in them: And thence conclude, that Subſtance is a Thing ſubſiſting of itſelf; but Accidents only in Matter fitly diſpoſed for the Reception of them. Thus alſo, by obſerving the Natures of Things, we raiſe indiſputable Maxims of Morality and Divinity; as for Inſtance, From the continued Preſervation of Things, we conclude, that the God that made them, ſtill preſerves them: And from conſidering the Motions and Operations of the Soul, that it is not only rational and immaterial, but immortal; becauſe, there are no diſcernable Qualities in it, that tend to Corruption: So that Truth reſults from a proper Connexion of Simple Ideas, of which Maxims of Life are made. Much indeed may be done in this by every Man's Reflection and Reaſoning; but, if we would make any conſiderable Advancement in it, the Writings of the

the Learned, in this way, will be of ſingular Uſe to direct our Thoughts in comparing Things, and drawing demonſtrative Concluſions from them.—— But the want of rightly connecting our Ideas, is the Deſtruction of all Knowledge and Certainty, the Foundation of Errors in Divinity and Practice. The Church of *Rome* affords us a deplorable Inſtance of this Sort, in her Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, which aſſerts the Accidents of Bread and Wine to remain after Conſecration; tho', by that act, they are chang'd into the very Body and Blood of our Saviour. Do we not clearly perceive, that Accidents cannot ſubſiſt without their proper Subſtances; and if ſo, it muſt be very abſurd to ſay, that the Accidents of Bread and Wine remain, as indeed is demonſtrable and undeniable by our Senſes, and yet the very Body and Blood of our Saviour to be really preſent. This is confounding our Ideas, joyning things that have no Relation one to another, and then dangerouſly reſolving them into Theological Tenents. But,

3. In order to attain a compleat Knowledge of Things, that we may act wiſely; 'Tis alſo neceſſary to ſearch the Writings and Learning of the more Judicious, and from them gather ſuch Rules of Action as will direct us to what is beſt in every Undertaking, which is the *Wiſdom* we are in queſt of. Could we gain no higher Degree of Knowledge than what our own Obſervation and Experience can furniſh us with, *Wiſdom* muſt either lie within a very narrow compaſs, or elſe be confin'd to very few; ſo little is to be learn'd by our greateſt Care and Diligence. But we have no reaſon to complain

for

for want of Aſſiſtance; we have the Experience of many Ages to inform us; we need only collect from them ſuch Maxims as will be of moſt Uſe to us in the Conduct of our Lives; like the buſie Bee, gather from every Flower what is moſt proper for our Nouriſhment.

Since *Knowledge* and *Underſtanding* then are ſo neceſſary to make Wiſe and Conſummate Men; ſince they diſtinguiſh us from the Vulgar, and advance us above the Common Pitch; ſince they afford ſuch conſiderable Delights, Benefit to the Soul, Advantage to Life, and Satisfaction to the Mind; we need not much Incitement of our Induſtry to attain them. Skill in Languages indeed, and Comprehenſion of Sciences, are not innate to us; they neither ſpring up ſpontaneouſly in our Minds, nor are they the Product of our common Obſervation; yet we need not grudge our Pains of earneſt Application, ſo long as the Attainment of them makes ſuch abundant Recompence for our Trouble in the Purſuit. For 'tis not with this, as with Labours of the Body, a Repetition of the ſame Work, but a continued Progreſs towards freſh Objects; ſo that the more we Study, the more we are Delighted; and the more we Know, the more we are pleas'd with Knowing. And ſince the Wiſe Man only acts ſafely and well; ſince Ignorance and Blindneſs expoſe to Miſchief and Misfortune, let us *get Wiſdom*; and in order to that, *get Underſtanding*.

What I have further to add, ſhall be compriz'd in an Inference or two, by way of Application. And,

1. If *Underſtanding* and *Wiſdom* are ſo Excellent in themſelves, and the Acquiſition of them ſo Difficult, Schools

Schools of Literature, and Places of Education, muſt be neceſſary and beneficial to Mankind. I need not here particularly urge all the Arguments drawn from their Advantage and Uſefulneſs, which lie open to every Body's Notice, are too many to be inſiſted on, and too well known to want a Deſcription. It may ſuffice to my preſent Purpoſe, only to add, That there is an abſolute neceſſity for us to Live well; we muſt, while Probationers on Earth, be Good and Vertuous, and attain to a Moral Perfection at leaſt: This is the very End of our Creation, the *one thing* required of us; which it will be almoſt impoſſible to arrive at, without Inſtruction. How ſhall we diſcern Good from Evil? How ſhall we, among the falſe Appearances and Colours of what is Plauſible and Honeſt, be able to keep ourſelves from Miſtake, unleſs we are rightly inform'd, unleſs by our Diſcerning Faculties, we can extricate ourſelves from thoſe Difficulties, which ſurprize and miſlead the Vulgar. So that Seminaries of Learning and Liberal Education are of very neceſſary Uſe, even in the moſt indiſpenſible Duties of Life; becauſe there we are furniſh'd with right Apprehenſions of Things in our tender Years, when we are ſuſceptible of any Impreſſions, before we have imbib'd Ill Principles, or are byaſs'd by Evil Inclinations.

I know, ſome modern Pretenders to ſpecial Gifts and Inſpiration, oppoſe and decry all Learning, and Places of it in Chriſtians: They look upon it a Deformity, or at leaſt Impertinent, when we have the Light of Scripture. But I think, God's own Authority is a ſufficient Anſwer to all their Cavils, who of old ordinarily diſpenſed the Gifts of his Holy Spirit to thoſe only that were fitted for it in the

Schools of Prophetical Education: Where we may obſerve, That the Qualifications antecedent and Preparatory to render a Man *Habilem ad Prophetandum*, were the Perfection of the Rational Faculty, acquir'd by Study, or good Accompliſhments of Wit, joyn'd with Probity and true Piety: Which when any had obtain'd in a way of School-Diſcipline, he became a Candidate, and waited thoſe *Divine Breathings*, which indeed only entred the Minds of thoſe that were thus diſpoſed for their reception, by theſe Moral and Acquired Perfections, (as may be ſeen prov'd at large by the incomparable Author of *Origines Sacræ.*)

Smith's Diſcourſe of Proph.

Still. Orig. Sacræ, l. 2. c. 4.

If therefore *Learning* and *Knowledge* were requir'd even in Times of immediate Inſpiration, ſurely the Neceſſity of them muſt Now be greater; becauſe ſince the Ceſſation of theſe Miraculous Gifts, they are the only Weapons left us to defend our Religion, to vanquiſh and repel the Force of its Adverſaries. So that tho' we cannot aſſert our Schools and Places of Learning to be ſtrictly by Divine Appointment; yet ſince they ſo nearly reſemble thoſe ancient ones of the Prophets, ſince they are ſo ſubſervient to Improve us in Knowledge and true Piety, the leaſt we can ſay of them, is, That they are by Divine Approbation.

2. If Learning and Inſtruction be ſo neceſſary and beneficial to Mankind, there ought certainly to be great Reſpect and Eſteem had for thoſe Worthy Perſons, that undertake ſo great a Work; for thoſe General Benefactors of Mankind, who value not their own Eaſe, when it ſtands in Competition with ſo Publick and Peculiar Bleſſings. What can be a more Generous

Generous and Noble Undertaking? How can any be more Serviceable in their Generation, than in Employments of this kind, in Qualifying others for the Higheſt Offices in Church and State, enabling them to do God good Service, and be Uſeful to the World? What Benefit can call for our Thanks, or can claim more Publick Acknowledgments, than infuſing into Men Loyal and Orthodox Principles, Sound Judgment, Vertuous and Regular Practice? Surely it muſt be a particular Diſpenſation of Providence, who is ever mindful of Man's Good, that inſpires ſuch Perſons with this peculiar Genius, Inclination, and Deſire of Benefiting and Improving the World; for which, as we have reaſon to give him the firſt and principal Honour, ſo are we oblig'd to return the next and profound Reſpect to his Inſtruments in ſo great and good a Work.

This I take to be one chief End of all theſe Annual Meetings: We therefore in particular, whoſe great Happineſs it has been to be Educated in this Place, are bound by the ſtricteſt Ties of Gratitude to expreſs our Senſe of the Advantages we have receiv'd from the Care and Watchfulneſs of our Wiſe and Great Maſter, whoſe Eminent Learning and Excellent Conduct, whoſe Happy Method and Indefatigable Diligence in Inſtructing the Youth under his Care, whoſe Sound Principles and Zeal for our Eſtabliſhment, brightned by his Morals and Exemplary Converſation, convince the World, that he claims more Reverence and Reſpect than we can give; yet ſhould we be wanting to ourſelves, did we not make what Returns we are able. But ſince our Appearance on this Occaſion ſhews our Willingneſs to perform this part of our Duty, I ſhall proceed,

Laſtly, To the true End of all Learning and Underſtanding; which is to attain to ſuch a practical Judgment of Things, as will make us act like truly Wiſe Men. *Wiſdom* conſiſts not in a bare Acquaintance with Words, or with the Dependencies and Coherencies of Things; but in a right Digeſtion of good Notions into Life and Practice. It is better underſtood as it ſhews itſelf in Mens Hearts and Actions, than in all the nice Subtleties of Wit, or the moſt convincing Demonſtration. Learning, indeed, is in itſelf very valuable, and deſerves the utmoſt Commendation we can give it; but unleſs it be accompanied with Purity of Life, which is the End of all Knowledge, it is neither an Ornament nor Perfection to us. Inſtead therefore of being over buſie in nice Speculations, and in furniſhing ourſelves with curious Notions, we had need guard ourſelves againſt the Follies and Irregularities of Life, leſt, while we are obſerving the Motions of Heavenly Bodies, we fall into a Precipice: For he that wants true Vertue, let his Mind be never ſo enlightned, let him ſee infinitely further than vulgar Light can reach, yet in the Senſe of Scripture, *he* 2 *Pet.* i. 9. *is blind and cannot ſee afar off.* Vertuous Practice being the Meaſure of all Knowledge; and true *Wiſdom* the ſole End of Underſtanding. From the whole then I think it appears, That *Wiſdom* or good Practice, that principal Thing, is the End of all Human Enquiries and Knowledge; That this practical Judgment cannot be attain'd without firſt underſtanding and having right Apprehenſions of Things: That theſe true Notions are not innate to us, but are acquir'd by our own Obſervation and Study, joyn'd with

with Inſtruction from others. From whence it is a natural Conſequence, that Places ſet apart for ſo good a Work, and Perſons that will Employ themſelves this way, are abſolutely and indiſpenſably neceſſary not only to the Good of Society, the Advantage of the Publick, but for the Happineſs and Salvation of particular Perſons; which was the Thing to be made out.

We cannot therefore but lament the Misfortune of ſome ingenious Youth, who, thro' the Miſtake of their miſled Parents, have ſpent the Morning of their Age in imbibing Error, and learnt artfully to defend falſe Doctrine and Schiſm: Who have been committed to the Care of Perſons, that, under the ſpecious Pretence of Univerſity-Learning, have corrupted their Principles both in Religion and Loyalty, and debauch'd their Practice, which is agreeable to them: Who, under a Notion of ſhorter Methods and clearer Light, have laid a Foundation for the Diſturbance and Confuſion of future Generations, even with the Hazard of their own Souls, as well as of thoſe that are inſtructed by them. But, Thanks be to God, this is not the Caſe of the Gentlemen preſent, ſome of which have been employ'd in the initial Parts of Learning in this Place, before they came to Maturity of Judgment, and from hence have receiv'd ſuch Notions both by Precept and Example, as, if rightly improv'd, will influence and direct them in their after Converſation; and ſince early Impreſſions are moſt laſting, will, 'tis to be hop'd, be moſt firmly retain'd, when they are old.

And to you, moſt hopeful and improving Youth, who are now under ſo happy Inſtruction and Diſcipline,

cipline, let no difficulty prove a Diſcouragement; Let the End of all Knowledge be ever in your View; and as you grow more Knowing, you will grow more Judicious. Your Eyes will be open'd to ſee the Follies of the World, and you will ſteer ſafely in this troubled Ocean, while others are wreckt by Factiouſneſs and Indiſcretions. Then you will ſee, that *Wiſdom* exceeds Folly, and *Learning* Ignorance, as Light excels Darkneſs: And, you will bleſs God, that your Learning has protected you from the Troubles of Life, and made you ſhine as Lights to Poſtery.

Which Effects of your Induſtry, God of his Mercy grant through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; To Whom with the Father and Holy Ghoſt, be, &c.

BOOKS Printed for R. KNAPLOCK,
at the Biſhop's Head *in* St. Paul's Church-yard.

ORigines Eccleſiaſticæ; Or, The Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church: Vol. I. In Two Books, whereof the Firſt treats of Chriſtians in general; their ſeveral Names and Degrees; of Catechumens, Laity and Clergy: And the Second gives a particular Account of the ſeveral Superior Orders and Offices in the Primitive Church. *The Second Edition.*

Origines Eccleſiaſticæ: Vol. II. Giving an Account, I. Of the Inferior Orders of the Ancient Clergy. II. Of the Manner of their Elections and Ordinations, and the particular Qualifications of ſuch as were to be Ordain'd. III. Of their Privileges, Immunities and Revenues. IV. Of the ſeveral Laws relating to their Employment, Life and Converſation. *The Second Edition.*

Origines Eccleſiaſticæ: Vol. III. Wherein is contain'd, I. An Account of the Ancient Aſceticks, and the Original of Monks ſucceeding them, with the ſeveral Laws and Rules relating to the Monaſtick Life. II. An Account of the Ancient Churches, their Original, Names, Parts, Utenſils, Conſecrations, Immunities, *&c.* III. A Geographical Deſcription of the Diſtricts of the Ancient Church, or an Account of its Diviſion into Provinces, Dioceſſes and Pariſhes; and of the firſt Original of theſe.

The *French* Churches Apology for the Church of *England*: Or, The Objections of Diſſenters againſt the Articles, Homilies, Liturgy and Canons of the *Engliſh* Church, Conſider'd and Anſwer'd upon the Principles of the Reformed Church of *France*. A Work chiefly extracted out of the Authentick Acts and Decrees of the *French* National Synods, and the moſt approved Writers of that Church.

Theſe Four by *J. Bingham*, Rector of *Headbourn Worthy* near *Wincheſter*, and ſometime Fellow of *Univerſity College*, *Oxon*.

The Chriſtian Pattern; Or, The Imitation of Jeſus Chriſt: Vol. II. Being the Genuine Works of *Thomas à Kempis*, containing Four Books; *viz.* I. The Sighs of a Penitent Soul, or a Treatiſe of true Compunction. II. A ſhort Chriſtian Directory. III. Of Spiritual Exerciſes. IV. Of Spiritual Entertainments. Tranſlated from the Original *Latin*, and recommended

mended by Dr. *Hicks*. To which is prefix'd a large Account of the Author's Life and Writings.

A Defence of the Fifty-fifth Canon: In Answer to a Book, intituled, *Reflections on Mr.* Bennet's *Discourse of Joint-Prayer*: Humbly offer'd to the Clergy; with some Considerations pleading for a strict Conformity to those Rules of the Church, and Laws of the Realm, which we have promis'd to obey: By *J. Bowtell* B. D. and Fellow of St. *John's College* in *Cambridge*.

The Clergy-man's *Vade Mecum*; in Two Parts: I. An Account of the Ancient and present Church of *England*; the Duties and Rights of the Clergy, and of their Privileges and Hardships; containing full Directions relating to Ordination, Institution, Induction, and most of the Difficulties which they meet with in the Discharge of their Office. Part II. Containing the Canonical Codes of the Primitive, Universal, *Eastern* and *Western* Church, down to the Year of our Lord 1687. Done from the Original *Greek* and *Latin*, omitting no Canon, Decree, or any Part of them that is curious or instructive: With Explanatory Notes, a large Index, and a Preface shewing the Usefulness of the Work; with some Reflections on Moderate Non-conformity, and the Rights of the Church. *The Third Edition.*

The Psalter or Psalms of Holy *David* according to the [illegible] the Common Prayer Book; with Explanatory Notes on all those Words and Sentences that are most difficult to be understood, together with Directions for the more devout Use of them; and an Historical Account of the Translation and Translators. As also a general Defence of this Psalter, against all Objections that the Dissenters have rais'd against it: By *J. Johnson* M. A. and Vicar of *Appledore* in *Kent*.